Julian & Roman Wasserfuhr

Landed in Brooklyn

Donny McCaslin

Tim Lefebvre

Nate Wood

ACT

Julian & Roman Wasserfuhr
Landed in Brooklyn

ACT 9829-2

01 Bernie's Tune
02 Tutto
03 Tinderly
04 Durch den Monsun
05 Carlo
06 S.N.C.F.
07 Ella
08 Seven Days
09 First Rays Of Dawn

Julian Wasserfuhr / trumpet & flugelhorn
Roman Wasserfuhr / piano, marimba & seaboard
Donny McCaslin / tenor saxophone
Tim Lefebvre / electric & double bass
Nate Wood / drums

Produced by Al Pryor
Curated by Siggi Loch

Recorded at Systems Two, Brooklyn (New York)

Cover art by David Schnell, Auszug, 2016 (detail),
by courtesy of Galerie EIGEN + ART Leipzig/Berlin

© + ℗ 2017 ACT Music + Vision GmbH + Co. KG
Postfach 140399 | D-80453 München | Germany
Warning: Unauthorized duplication, public performance and broadcasting
of this music is a violation of applicable laws

info@actmusic.com www.actmusic.com

LC 07644

THE ACT COMPANY

01 Bernie's Tune 5:50
02 Tutto 5:11
03 Tinderly 7:25
04 Durch den Monsun (P. Benzner, P. Hoffmann, D. Jost, D. Roth & B. Kaulitz) 8:19
05 Carlo 6:06
06 S.N.C.F. 6:05
07 Ella 4:44
08 Seven Days (Sting: G. M. Sumner) 5:44
09 First Rays Of Dawn 7:31

Music composed by Julian & Roman Wasserfuhr, unless otherwise noted

Julian Wasserfuhr / trumpet & flugelhorn
Roman Wasserfuhr / piano, marimba & seaboard
Donny McCaslin / tenor saxophone
Tim Lefebvre / electric & double bass
Nate Wood / drums

Produced by Al Pryor
Curated by Siggi Loch

Recorded by Max Ross at Systems Two Recording Studios, Brooklyn (New York), August 13 & 14, 2016
Mixed and mastered by Klaus Scheuermann, September 2016

Photos by Jimmy Katz

Julian & Roman would like to thank: Tim, Nate, Donny, Al, Max & Systems Two. Lex, Linda, Hanni, Lilly, Theo Wagner. Jimmy, Dena, Jason, Klaus, Malte. Fam. Atug, Chris, Wilma, Krözil & Ella. Bernd, Andreas, Martin, Olli, Schief, Thomas, Thorsten Legat. Siggi & the ACT Team

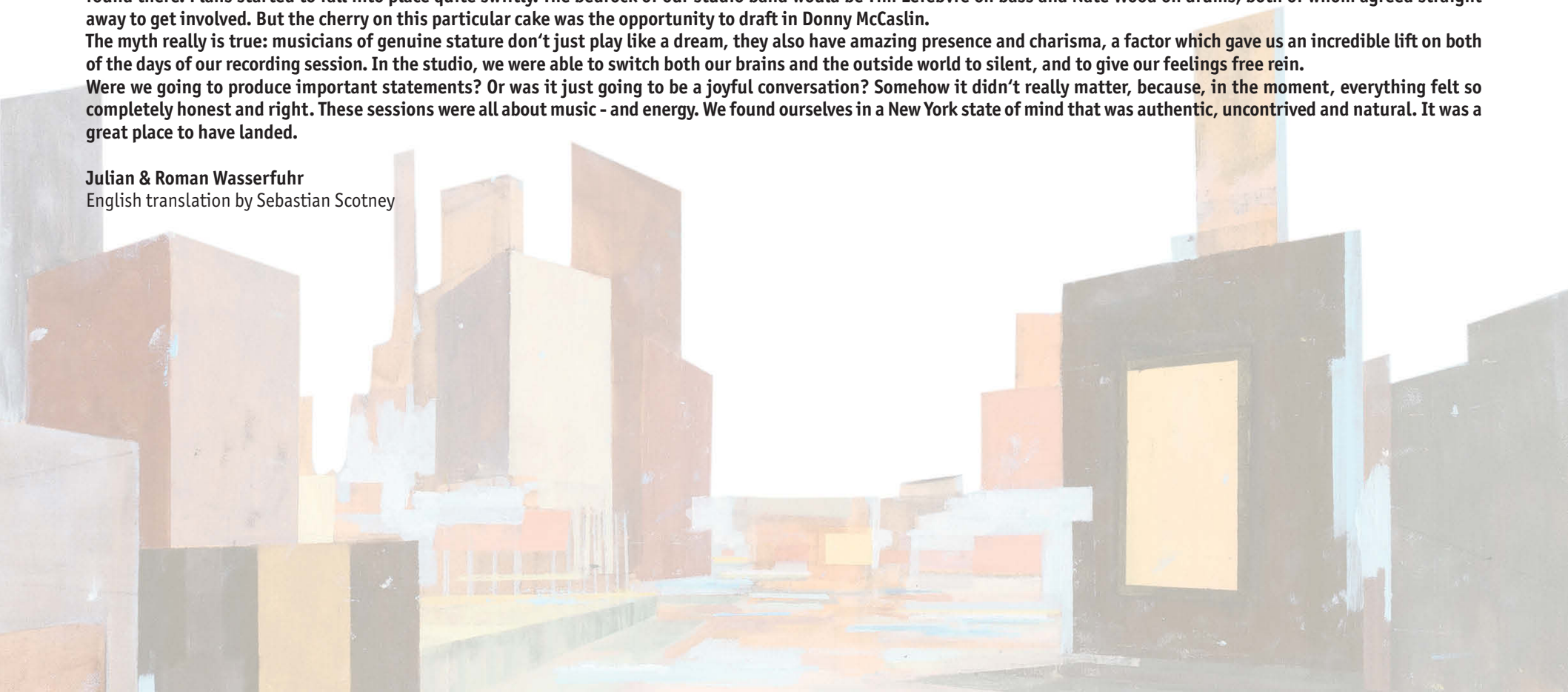
This album is dedicated to our friend and mentor Peter Lappe

www.wasserfuhr-jazz.com, www.facebook.com/wasserfuhrjazz, booking: office@busybomusic.com

Für uns als Musiker ist es immer das Wichtigste, nicht stehen zu bleiben. Ständig sucht man nach Inspiration, um sich weiterzuentwickeln.
Als Siggi Loch uns im vergangenen Jahr anrief und fragte, ob wir Lust hätten ein weiteres Album für sein Label ACT aufzunehmen, stimmten wir natürlich zu, obwohl uns sämtliche Ideen, und, wie es heute allgemein üblich ist, ein Konzept für ein neues Album fehlten. Ein Glück, dass Siggi uns im gemeinsamen Gespräch vorschlug, nach New York zu fliegen, um uns von einer Stadt inspirieren zu lassen, die voller Magie und natürlich Jazz steckt.
Als Fundament der Studioband konnten wir Tim Lefebvre am Bass und Nate Wood an den Drums gewinnen, die prompt zusagten. Schlussendlich hatten wir sogar die Chance, Donny McCaslin ins Studio einzuladen.
Es stimmt wohl, wenn man sagt, dass enorm gute Musiker nicht nur besonders gut spielen, sondern auch eine besondere Aura besitzen.Davon inspiriert, hatten wir eine wunderbare, zweitägige Aufnahmesession in Brooklyn.
Zwei Tage, an denen wir unsere Köpfe „ausgeschaltet" haben und unseren Gefühlen freien Lauf lassen konnten.
Ob dabei triviale oder gewichtige Musik entstehen würde, spielte für uns keine Rolle. In diesem Moment fühlte sich alles sehr natürlich und ehrlich an. Es ging nur um Musik und Energie; authentisch und ungekünstelt.

One thing which is really important for us as musicians is not to get stuck in a rut. We keep looking for the inspiration which will allow us to develop. When Siggi Loch called us up last year, and asked if we were interested in making another album for the ACT label, naturally we agreed - but we also admitted that we hadn't really given it much thought, and we certainly didn't have a unifying concept.
So it was our good fortune when he threw a suggestion into the discussion: we should head off for New York, be inspired by the magic of the city, and of course by all the jazz to be found there. Plans started to fall into place quite swiftly. The bedrock of our studio band would be Tim Lefebvre on bass and Nate Wood on drums, both of whom agreed straight away to get involved. But the cherry on this particular cake was the opportunity to draft in Donny McCaslin.
The myth really is true: musicians of genuine stature don't just play like a dream, they also have amazing presence and charisma, a factor which gave us an incredible lift on both of the days of our recording session. In the studio, we were able to switch both our brains and the outside world to silent, and to give our feelings free rein.
Were we going to produce important statements? Or was it just going to be a joyful conversation? Somehow it didn't really matter, because, in the moment, everything felt so completely honest and right. These sessions were all about music - and energy. We found ourselves in a New York state of mind that was authentic, uncontrived and natural. It was a great place to have landed.

Julian & Roman Wasserfuhr
English translation by Sebastian Scotney



By now everyone in the arts world in the greater metropolitan New York area, whether they are creators, performers, or just audience members, knows that while Manhattan may still be the reigning king when it comes to establishment institutions like Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall or venues stretching from the Apollo Theater in Harlem all the way down to the Village Vanguard; the real action is in Brooklyn! What was once a collection of Dutch colonies, farming and trading communities in the 1600's now boasts a population of 2.6 million which, were it not for the fact that it is one of the five boroughs that make up New York City, would make Brooklyn the 4th largest city in the United States.

Word travels fast in the international jazz community, which is after all, a family of sorts; with relatives the world over. Julian and Roman Wasserfuhr, exalted members of the clan as jazz composers and players, know a good thing when they hear it. So they made their way over here to partake and share in some of the extraordinary variety and abundance of creativity being generated by musicians from their generation working in apartments, lofts, bars, clubs and studios in every corner of the Brooklyn arts community. Wisely the brothers chose Joe & Nancy Marciano's System Two Recording Studios. The explosion of cultural activity in Brooklyn can be measured in years, but System Two's legacy, particularly in jazz, must be measured in decades. Blessed with a piano that previously provided its services for Carnegie Hall performances and a classic ribbon microphone once owned by John Coltrane amongst other tools of the trade, Systems Two has been home to sessions for everyone from Anthony Braxton to Cassandra Wilson. The end results can be heard on **Landed in Brooklyn.**

Julian and Roman, consummate jazz artists that they are, know that this genre of music, perhaps more so than any other, draws on the cultural diversity of many other styles of music. This means having players who are open enough and skilled enough to go anywhere the brothers' compositions take them. Players with those instincts thrive in Brooklyn, whether they live there or just come in to town to work. Bassist Tim Lefebvre, a former New Yorker now living in LA is one such artist. He has performed all manner of genres of music as evidenced by his own recent history working with exceptional musicians like guitarist Wayne Krantz, the Saturday Night Live band – a gig that requires you to play everything behind everybody, a star turn with David Bowie's Blackstar band, and his day gig with the Tedeschi Trucks band. Lefebvre's equal command on acoustic bass and electric bass, as demonstrated in the wonderfully optimistic up tempo opening number, **Bernie's Tune**, is key to the ensemble sound that these players achieved, without rehearsals, but with big ears and inspired playing. This selection features the band in its quintet form with guest artist Donny McCaslin's saxophone weaving and blending his counter melody with Julian's trumpet. Talk about a breadth of experience; McCaslin's tastes run from his GRAMMY nominated work with Maria Schneider to… well… David Bowie.

Julian and Roman's obvious appreciation of popular tempos that owe more to funk and back beats than to swing, while never sacrificing the intelligence of their writing is on display in **Tutto.** Julian's wicked solo is balanced by Roman's thoughtful and soulful take on the changes of the song. The tune offers drummer Nate Wood the opportunity to find that deep groove in the music that musicians love to play and audiences love to hear (and dance to when the spirit moves them). Wood is a Los Angeles transplant to Brooklyn who clearly finds the musical environment to his liking. As an accomplished electric bassist and guitarist he's able to satisfy all of creative urges in the many different musical environments for which Brooklyn is justly famous. Less well known is the fact that Wood is also in demand for his work as a mastering engineer.

Every music fan in these players' generation has their favorite power ballad or rock anthem etched in their memories of good times with friends at concerts or even gathering around a stereo playing way too loud with the music washing over them. Tokio Hotel's **Durch den Monsun**, provides the perfect vehicle for the band to channel their appreciation of such sentiments with a clever arrangement by Julian and Roman that showcases their trademark interweaving of melodic lines, a blistering tenor solo by McCaslin followed by Julian's intensely rhythmic riffs, and Nate Wood closing out the tune with a power drum salvo worthy of any of the great rock percussion solos one might name.

Ella, **S.N.C.F.**, **Tinderly** and the brothers' arrangement of Stings **Seven Days** are each in their own way beloved takes on jazz forms that caused many of us to become fans of this music in the first place. It is oddly appropriate that a tune named **S.N.C.F.** (Société Nationale des Chemins de Français) appear on a jazz recording. The rhythmic journey of trains from the south of the United States to the North, first as a metaphor for the informal network of abolitionists, slaves and free black men and women who provided an escape from slavery to freedom known as the Underground Railroad; and a generation later for their ancestors who literally boarded trains for the North to escape the Jim Crow segregation laws of the South is history which is central to the culture of African Americans and therefore to jazz.

On **Tinderly** and **S.N.C.F.** Julian and Donny make their bid for a place among the great front line horn players of jazz calling to mind such combinations as Freddie Hubbard's rapid fire approach to his instrument balanced with a dollop of "cool" together with the deep rooted soul of Stanley Turrentine. With **Seven Days** Julian and Roman Wasserfuhr demonstrate, once again, why jazz players own the 5/4 time signature. **Carlo** fuses the energy of this ensemble into the discipline, empathy and majesty that can only be found in a great ballad. Roman begins the final performance on the record, **First Rays Of Dawn**, just as he began the first: with a motif expressed in his pianism that allows Julian and the band to slip into a rapid and revelatory up tempo waltz; closing out the recording as they began, and in a manner characteristic of what has become a tradition in Brooklyn and beyond: new ideas and the artists who bring them.

Al Pryor
Album Producer
November 2016

Der Weg ist das Ziel.

Eine Redewendung, die gerade für Jazzer und insbesondere für die Brüder Julian & Roman Wasserfuhr gilt: Jazz bedeutet, sich treiben zu lassen, zu suchen und sich auf der Suche zu finden. Jazz ist der Mut, sich dem Augenblick hinzugeben, die Dinge immer wieder neu zu denken. Jazzmusiker sind immer auf dem Weg, sie wollen gar nicht ankommen, denn Stillstand ist Rückschritt. Das hält den Jazz lebendig, macht ihn fortschrittlich und stets überraschend.

Mit ihrem fünften Album haben sich Julian & Roman Wasserfuhr nun auf die Reise ins Mutterland des Jazz begeben und sind im Hotspot des internationalen Jazz gelandet: New York. Dort trafen sie auf die amerikanischen Jazzstars Donny McCaslin, Tim Lefebvre und Nate Wood und schlugen mit „Landed in Brooklyn" ein weiteres Kapitel in ihrer beeindruckenden Karriere auf.

Früh wurden Julian & Roman Wasserfuhr flügge und machten sich auf ihren Weg. Mit erst 17 und 20 Jahren wurden die beiden von Produzent Siggi Loch entdeckt und avancierten zu einem Aushängeschild des „Young German Jazz", jener ACT-Reihe, die dem deutschen Jazznachwuchs bis heute eine gewichtige Plattform gibt. „Remember Chet" hieß 2006 das „umwerfende Debüt" (Süddeutsche Zeitung), eine Ehrerweisung an Chet Baker, aber durchaus bereits mit eigenem Ton. Die musikalische Reifeprüfung „Upgraded in Gothenburg" mit den skandinavischen Jazzstars Nils Landgren, Lars Danielsson und Magnus Lindgren folgte 2009. „Gravity" (2011) im Quartett mit Wolfgang Haffner und Lars Danielsson erzählt von der Schwerkraft und ihrer Überwindung: „Ein Gedicht. [...] Diese Musik strahlt eine enorme Anziehungskraft aus", schrieb der Stern. 2013 standen Julian & Roman Wasserfuhr dann gänzlich auf eigenen Beinen: „Running" wurde im eigenen Studio selbst komponiert, aufgenommen und produziert.

Von Hückeswagen nun nach New York: „Landed in Brooklyn", aus ihrem beschaulichen Heimatort im Oberbergischen bei Köln in den Big Apple, ins pulsierende Leben: „Für uns als Musiker ist es immer das Wichtigste, nicht stehen zu bleiben. Ständig sucht man nach Inspiration, um sich weiterzuentwickeln. Als Siggi Loch uns vorschlug, das nächste Album in New York aufzunehmen, sagten wir spontan zu, obwohl wir noch keinerlei konkrete Ideen für ein neues Album hatten", erzählt Julian Wasserfuhr.

Die Magie der Stadt wurde zum Konzept: New York als Impulsgeber. Dort trafen sie im berühmten Systems Two Studio in Brooklyn auf die arrivierten amerikanischen Ideengeber. Allen voran Saxofonist Donny McCaslin, dessen Spiel bereits David Bowie dermaßen begeisterte, dass er ihn zum integralen Bestandteil seines letzten Albums „Blackstar" machte. Tim Lefebvre, hierzulande bekannt durch das Michael Wollny Trio und ebenfalls Mitglied Bowies letzter Band, ist im Jazz wie Rock zu Hause. Wayne Krantz, die Tedeschi Trucks Band, Toto bis hin zu Elvis Costello schätzen seinen Bass. Als Groovemaster ist Nate Wood ein gefragter first call musician und enger musikalischer Vertrauter McCaslins. Wäre diese geballte Jazzkompetenz nicht schon genug, gesellte sich noch ein GRAMMY-Gewinner für das große Ganze zu der Aufnahmesession: Der Produzent Al Pryor. Cécile McLorin Salvant, Raul Midón und Christian McBride hat er bereits zum Erfolg geführt.

Wenig war abgesprochen, als Julian & Roman Wasserfuhr auf die amerikanischen Koryphäen trafen. Sie brachten Stücke und Manuskripte mit ins Studio, doch die Devise war: sehen, was passiert, die Dinge laufen lassen. Und so besitzt „Landed in Brooklyn" einen mitreißenden Session-Charakter, der viel Raum für Improvisationen lässt. Lebendigkeit, Ehrlichkeit und Individualität charakterisieren die Einspielung: „Es stimmt wohl, wenn man sagt, dass enorm gute Musiker nicht nur besonders gut spielen, sondern auch eine besondere Aura besitzen", erinnert sich Roman Wasserfuhr an die Aufnahmen. ...und sie beflügeln: Das Spiel der Brüder ist hörbar variantenreicher, mutiger und kraftvoller geworden.

Da Musik nie im luftleeren Raum entsteht, ist die Atmosphäre von New York in jedem Ton spürbar. „Landed in Brooklyn" erzählt von der Stadt und seinen Musikern. Ein atmosphärisch dichter Mainstream-Jazz ist entstanden, der Bilder im Kopf hervorruft. Emotionen werden transportiert. Das Album ist zupackender und, im besten Sinne des Wortes, verspielter geworden, swingender, schlussendlich amerikanischer als seine Vorgänger, aber ohne den typischen Wasserfuhr-Sound zu verlieren.

„Landed in Brooklyn" ist nicht nur ein beeindruckender Zwischenstopp, sondern auch ein neuer musikalischer Aufbruch geworden, der Spuren hinterlässt. „If I can make it there, I'm gonna make it anywhere", sang Frank Sinatra über New York. Die Reise von Julian & Roman Wasserfuhr geht weiter, mit einem gewichtigen Argument mehr im Gepäck: Mit „Landed in Brooklyn" werden die Jazzbrüder ganz sicher überall mit offenen Armen empfangen.

ACT 25 magic years

1992. It was a time of change, the ending of old eras and the start of new ones. The year was ushered in by the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The Maastricht treaty was signed in February, finally making the European Union a reality. Later in the year, Bill Clinton was elected to the American Presidency, driving the Republican George Bush Sr. out of the White House. There were also those that shuffled off this mortal coil in 1992: Willy Brandt, for example, and Marlene Dietrich. And there were arrivals too: Mario Götze, the future football hero whose late goal won the 2014 World Cup final for Germany, was born.

For Siggi Loch, this time of transition and upheaval was the moment to take a decisive and momentous step. His career as a producer and a manager in the international music business had brought him a degree of success almost without precedent in the history of the industry, enabling him to bring a dream he had been harbouring since his youth to fruition: he took the plunge and founded the ACT jazz record label. A new adventure had begun. Industry prognoses at the time were not exactly promising, in fact they were anything but. It was the beginning of the digital era, which was about to put the music industry into a slow but irreversible tailspin. Despite this sombre background, ACT picked up the pace, and its story is one of success. This is a label which has both discovered and promoted previously unknown talent on a very substantial scale, and it has done this by being true to itself and to its motto, "in the spirit of jazz." Now, in 2017, twenty five years later, ACT is one of the most important and best-loved jazz labels in the world. Through releasing more than five hundred albums, ACT can legitimately claim to have written at least a part of the continuing story of jazz. The label's artists - the "ACT-ers", to coin a phrase – the likes of Nils Landgren, Youn Sun Nah, Michael Wollny, Iiro Rantala, Lars Danielsson and Wolfgang Haffner - have become established as some of the leading figures in the music.

"Jazz is the freedom to play anything," observed Duke Ellington. At ACT, Siggi Loch and his team allow those words to resonate through everything they do: what drives them forward and inspires them is the search to bring magic musical moments to listeners with receptive ears. Jazz is at the epicentre, but there is a fundamental openness - and in all conceivable directions. This approach means that there are no fears or resistance when it comes to letting different genres rub up against each other. ACT is inspired by pop, rock, soul, classical music and the folk traditions. It is in lockstep with the ethos of now, but it also looks forward. So the label is able to surprise listeners again and again with its range and variety. The common denominator is to make music which speaks directly to people, music which appeals to the heart, engages the mind and awakens the soul. This is true for the Jimi Hendrix project "Purple", from the first ACT exclusive artist Nguyên Lê. It also holds for Jan Lundgren's "Magnum Mysterium" in which Gregorian chant is infused with the Scandinavian idiom. Michael Wollny's Wunderkammer (magical chamber) in which jazz and new music are alchemically combined is another location where this ethos reigns.

It is a very long time since jazz first took wing from America, and found a new and welcoming home in Europe. ACT's mission is to give the "Sound of Europe" a roof over its head. Right from the start, with ACT's very first release in 1992, "Jazzpaña", the new and the old worlds were standing shoulder to shoulder. This album brought the greatest Flamenco virtuosos from Spain together with Cologne's WDR Big Band, and also with major figures from the US such as Michael Brecker and Al Di Meola. The two composer-arrangers of the music on "Jazzpaña", Arif Mardin and Vince Mendoza - the latter virtually unknown at the time - produced a work which has withsood thepassage of time, and stands as a shining example of a multicultural statement. It is a demonstration of the power of jazz as a world language to unite people and to bring their cultural heritages together. The jazz symphony "Europeana" was another landmark in the ACT story. It was released in 1995, and consists of works written by the British composer/arranger Michael Gibbs. It is in effect a summit meeting of the leading contemporary European improvising musicians: Joachim Kühn, Django Bates, Klaus Doldinger, Albert Mangelsdorff and Markus Stockhausen, together with the classical oboist Douglas Boyd. With the support of Radiophilharmonie Hannover, they combine the rich tradition of European music with the language of jazz. The project "Mare Nostrum", with musicians from three different countries – Italy, France and Sweden – unites Europe through music. Trumpeter Paolo Fresu, accordionist Richard Galliano and pianist Jan Lundgren bring the musical languages of their home countries together and create an experience in sound that has real depth to it. The French jazz scene stands out for being full of experimentation, forward-looking and teeming with energy. Two of its outstanding individuals the accordionist Vincent Peirani and the saxophonist Emile Parisien have found their places as members of the ACT family. These are two visionaries whose music announces a new 'Belle Époque' for contemporary European jazz. The Swiss vocal artist Andreas Schaerer, the Polish violin virtuoso Adam Bałdych and the Norwegian saxophonist Marius Neset all carry great hopes for a bright future in which improvised music is being discovered afresh.

For a small country, Sweden can appear gigantic in many respects. It has a huge presence in European jazz, in which ACT plays a highly significant role. The label is the leading exporter of jazz from Sweden to the rest of the world. Siggi Loch received official recognition for this when he was awarded the Order of the North Star, Knight 1st Class by His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden. The leading Swedish personality on ACT is Nils Landgren. He is not just the ACT label's best-selling artist, he has also taken his place during the course of the past 25 years as an international jazz star of the first rank. Whether he is cast in the role of all-action hero with his Funk Unit, or melting hearts with his interpretation of ballads, the man with the red trombone "infuses European jazz with strength" (according to the respected Munich broadsheet the Süddeutsche Zeitung). ACT's Swedish

connections have led to other exceptional talents joining the label's roster, such as Lars Danielsson, Viktoria Tolstoy and Ida Sand. And - of course - there is Esbjörn Svensson, the pianist and mastermind behind the trio e.s.t., the most influential jazz group of the first decade of this century. With his trio he effected a revolution in jazz. The "rock band that plays jazz," as Svensson himself once called e.s.t, created an identity for jazz that was as far removed as possible from tiny dives, and saw them conquering large concert halls and thrilling young audiences whose main affinity was for rock.

And why go searching far afield when good things are often to be found so much closer to home? It is a matter of particular personal concern to Siggi Loch to keep his ears close to the ground, to observe the rising generation of German jazz musicians, to speak up for them and to them to gain a foothold. Siggi Loch's first album with Klaus Doldinger "Jazz Made in Germany" was made as far back as 1962, and this title was the cue for him to take this commitment further at ACT. The "Young German Jazz" series has been successfully presenting promising new talent since 2005. The first artist to appear under this banner was Michael Wollny who has established himself in the intervening period as the most siginificant German jazz musician of his generation. Wollny has garnered no fewer than eight ECHO Jazz Awards, and been honoured with the title of "European Jazz Musician of the Year" by the French Académie du Jazz, proof positive of his unique standing on the international scene. The trumpet and piano-playing brothers Julian & Roman Wasserfuhr have also successfully made the leap to the pinnacle of German jazz. The "Newcomer of the Year" at the ECHO Jazz Awards in 2015 was vocalist Natalia Mateo. Beside the innovative trio "Three Fall", she is another young artist who has just arrived at the starting gates and is about to ascend to the heights.

"ACT seems to be on a mission to introduce the world to Europe's rising new jazz-classical pianists", wrote John Fordham, the UK's leading jazz critic in The Guardian. This theme does indeed run like a thread through the evolution of ACT as a label: Esbjörn Svensson, Joachim Kühn, Richie Beirach, Vijay Iyer, Leszek Możdżer, Iiro Rantala - and Michael Wollny too - have all left their mark with major piano recordings.

Jazz invariably means making things for the first time. And it is only by leaving the well-trodden paths, by looking risk and danger in the eye can that one find the unexpected and the unheard. In this process, ACT has the role of a reliable compass, pointing a listener looking for jazz, or for exciting music "in the spirit of jazz" consistently in the right direction. ACT loves what it does, has been doing it well for a quarter of a century, and continues with the same ethos into the future. ACT 25 Years is a flood of memories. But it also serves as a re-affirmation.